

*The Peculiar Excellency and Reward of Sup-
porting Schools of Charity.*

N^o 1853. A N^o 1853.

SERMON

Preach'd in the Parish-Church of

St. SEPULCHRE,

MAY the 24th, 1716.

Being Thursday in Whitson-Week,

A T T H E

**Anniversary Meeting of the CHILDREN
Educated in the Charity-Schools in and about
the Cities of LONDON and WESTMINSTER.**

K
By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
EDMUND, *Bishop* Lord Bishop of **LINCOLN.**

*Publisb'd at the Request of several of the Gentlemen
concerned in that CHARITY.*

L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by Joseph Downing, in Bartholamew-
Close near West-Smithfield, 1716.

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EDWARD J. BROWN

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DANIEL xii. Ver. 3.

*And they that be wise, shall shine as
the Brightness of the Firmament;
and they that turn many to Right-
eousness, as the Stars for ever
and ever.*

THIS and the foregoing Verse are generally interpreted in the same Way, as the Passages in the New Testament concerning Christ's coming to Judgment: many of which do immediately relate to the Destruction that he would send upon Jerusalem and the Nation of the Jews; but are expressed withal under such Circumstances, as evidently look forward to the general Judgment of the World. In like

Ver. 2. manner, this Prophecy of *Daniel* concerning the *awaking of those who then slept in the Dust of the Earth*, is suppos'd to have an immediate Eye to the approaching Deliverance, and as it were the Revival or Resurrection of the Jewish Nation, by the Death of *Antiochus*, out of that low and miserable State into which they were then sunk ; not improperly compar'd to being *bury'd in the Dust of the Earth*. But at the same Time, it is very evident, that some of the Expressions in this Passage can relate to no other Resurrection, but that of the last Day ; *Many of them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake ; some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt* : which cannot, strictly speaking, be confin'd to that Deliverance of the Jews out of their persecuted State ; because, upon the Death of *Antiochus*, all in general, and without Distinction, were to rise up into a prosperous and flourishing Condition, and none of them to Shame or Contempt.

And this Distinction of the Condition of Men in the next World, according to their Behaviour in this, (*some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt*) is not only applicable to the Judgment of the last Day ; but it is the very Description which
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the Gospel gives us of the Case of good and bad Men at the general Resurrection; *These* (says our Saviour) *shall go away into Ever-* Matt. xxv.
lasting Punishment; but the Righteous into Life 42.
eternal. And the Prophet having assign'd in the 2d. Verse the different Portions of the Righteous and the Wicked, at the Day of Retribution; adds in the 3d. Verse, (the Verse which I have chosen for my Text) that as to the *Measures and Degrees* of Glory in the next World, there will be also some Difference and Distinction among those who shall be rais'd to everlasting Life; and particularly, that they who have made it their Business to instruct others in their Duty, and have been Instruments, in the Hands of God, to turn Mankind into the Paths of Righteousness, shall be distinguish'd at that Day by a more eminent degree of Glory, and shall be known by a peculiar Brightness and Lustre, like the Stars in the Firmament of Heaven. *They that be wise, or as it is render'd in the Margin, they that be Teachers, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

From which Words, I will discourse at this Time upon two Heads:

First,

First, The Persons, to whom this distinguishing Reward or Glory in the next World, is promis'd ; and they are such as apply themselves to the most probable and effectual Methods, of instructing Mankind in their Duty, and turning them into the Paths of Righteousness; or, as the Text describes them, they are *Teachers, and such as turn many to Righteousness.*

Secondly, The particular Excellencies of this Work of training up Mankind to the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty; which Excellencies do entitle it to such a *great and exceeding* Reward from the Hands of God.

First then, Who are the Persons to whom this distinguishing Reward and Glory in the next World is promis'd ? They are those in general, who apply themselves to the most probable and effectual Methods, of instructing Mankind in their Duty, and turning them into the Paths of Righteousness. The Text describes them, *First*, under the Name of *Wise, or Teachers*, they who have instructed themselves in the Laws of God, and make it their Business to see others instructed: A Work, which belongs more eminently to the Ministers

sters of *Jesus Christ*, as an Order of Men specially sent and appointed by him, for the perpetual Instruction and Edification of his Church; to preach the sincere Word of God, to explain and enforce the particular Duties of the Christian Life, to instruct the Ignorant, confirm the Weak, and convince Gain-sayers; and in short, to set the Principles and Doctrines of Christianity in such a clear Light, as may dispel the Clouds of Ignorance, and deliver their Hearers from all Doubts and Errors, whether in Faith or Practice.

But altho' this Work, as I said, belongs in a more peculiar manner to the Ministers of *Jesus Christ*, as specially instituted and appointed for that End; it is to be consider'd, that their Teaching is chiefly directed to those, who are arriv'd to Years of Reason and Understanding, and bring with them a competent Knowledge of the general Principles of Religion; and where there is not such a Preparatory Knowledge, it may truly be said in the Words of the Apostle, that their *Hearing is vain, and our Preaching is vain also*. Now, in the ordinary Course and Nature of Things, it is next to impossible for Ministers, especially in large and populous Parishes, to carry on these
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necessary Preparations ; because they, in whom they are to be wrought, are yet Children in Age and Understanding ; into whose Minds these Instructions must be infused by little and little, as their narrow Capacities are able to receive them ; and from the light and unsettl'd Fancies of Children, no degrees of Application are to be hop'd, but what are owing to the *constant Attendance* of their Teachers, and the Order and Government of the Places where they are taught. These are, our publick Schools of Education ; where Children, with their other Attainments, are best instructed in the Principles of Religion ; and where they are prepar'd to go on to further degrees of Knowledge, by being made capable to read and hear Religious Discourses, with Delight and Profit.

And this is not only one Branch of Teaching within the Meaning and Intention of the Text, but however small in it self, is in the Effects a very *important* Branch, as it is the Foundation of their future Improvements, and that without which no future Improvements at all would ordinarily be made. And proportionable to the Necessity and Importance of this Work, is the Merit and Reward of all those who labour about it, and study to promote it ; those who
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give up their whole Time to that laborious, but very useful Employment ; and those who contribute to their Support and Encouragement, according to the Abilities with which God hath blessed them ; especially when such Pains and Contributions are laid out, in providing Instruction for those, who, by reason of the Narrowness of their Fortunes, must otherwise have grown up in utter Ignorance of their Duty.

2. Another Sort of Persons, to whom the Text ensures this distinguishing Reward and Glory in the next World, are they who turn many to Righteousness ; *They that be Wise, or the Teachers, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament ; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And this Work, as that other of Teaching, principally belongs to the Ministers of the Gospel ; who have a Command and Authority from *Jesus Christ*, not only to be the Overseers of their several Flocks, and to explain to them the general Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, and to warn obstinate Sinners of the Danger of their Ways ; but also, as they find Occasion, and where general Exhortations and Warnings have no Effect, to rebuke, reprove, and admonish,

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nish, with all Freedom and Boldness, and to make Head against every Sin that shall exalt it self against God and his Laws; as those who are to give an Account of the Souls committed to their Care. And towards this Work of turning Sinners into the Paths of Righteousness, great Service may be done, great Assistance receiv'd, from a due Exercise of the Authority of Parents over their Children, of Masters over their Servants, and of Magistrates over all; who are *the Ministers of God* in their several Stations, *to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil*, and by faithfully employing the Power which God has entrusted with them for that End, may contribute a great deal towards the Reformation of Mankind, and secure to themselves that distinguishing Reward in the next World, which the Text appropriates to those who in this World have been the Instruments of *turning many to Righteousness*.

But there is another Way of delivering Mankind from Sin and Vice, which is also naturally comprehended under this Phrase of *turning many to Righteousness*; and that is, the bending the Minds of Children, while they are tender and pliable, and are not yet infected with Habits of Vice, to the Ways of Goodness and Righteousness.

ness. Reproofs and Admonitions to turn Men from their wicked Ways, are the Application of a Remedy to an inveterate Disease; but to turn the Minds and Inclinations of *Children* into the right Way at first, this is to foresee and prevent the Disease it self. It is to write and imprint the Laws of God upon the Tables of their Hearts, while they are yet white and clean, not sully'd by any Filth or Pollution contracted by sinful Courses; while they are in a good Measure Strangers to the Vices of the World, and by such an early Prepossession of Virtue and Goodness, are put into the surest Way to be Proof against them as long as they live. But now, the Actions and Dispositions of Children do not ordinarily fall within the Knowledge of Civil Magistrates or Spiritual Pastors, especially, as I said before, in *Parishes* that are large and populous; Where therefore the right forming of the Minds of Children, and the turning them into the right Way, must chiefly depend upon the Observation of Parents, and the Watchfulness of those to whom they commit the Care of their Education. But what then shall become of those unhappy Children, whose Parents are taken away, or their Circumstances too mean and narrow to furnish out

either Education or Calling? They are sent into the wide World, without Restraint and without Employment; and being left to themselves, it is easily foreseen into what Way the Corruption of Nature and the Example of a wicked World, will quickly turn them. And without doubt, the greater their Danger is under such unhappy Circumstances, the more worthy and seasonable is that Charity which works their Deliverance, by providing them a good Education, as a Step to some honest and useful Calling; that is, by first turning them *into* the Way of Righteousness, and then, under the Influence of God's Grace, preserving and fixing them *in* that Way.

And this brings me to the Second general Head; *viz.*

II. The particular Excellencies of training up Mankind to the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty; on account of which Excellencies it is entitl'd to such a *high* and *distinguishing* Reward from the Hands of God. And in discoursing of the Excellencies of this Work, I shall have a more particular Eye to the Case before us, the Care that is taken, and the Contributions that are made, by pious and good Christians, for the Instruction and Education of

of the poorer Sort of Children. Which is a Work more peculiarly acceptable to God.

1. As it is Charity.
2. As it is Charity to the Soul.
3. As it is a Charity proceeding from the noblest Motives.
4. As it is a Charity employ'd to the best Advantage.
5. As it is a Charity, extending not only to the present Age, but also to Posterity.

1. This Work is a Work of Charity; carrying in it a general Love to Mankind, and a Desire to see every one happy and comfortable; a Disposition, that sets Men above that mean and low Principle, of not caring what becomes of the rest of Mankind, if themselves can be quiet and easie; a Disposition, which prompts Men to a Concern for their Neighbours, to lay their Wants and Miseries to Heart, and to contrive and pursue the most effectual Methods, to make their Condition in the World as easy and prosperous as we can. This is a *Godlike* Disposition, and in the strictest sense an Imitation of God, whose Care is over the whole Creation, and whose Goodness and Providence are perpetually working for the Comfort and Benefit of his Creatures. On which account, every Instance of Concern for the Welfare

Welfare and Happiness of Mankind, is properly the carrying on of God's Work; and every charitable Disposition in Man, is a happy Instrument in the Hands of God, to convey Comfort and Assistance to his Creatures. And the Argument whereby our Saviour recommends to Christians this Spirit of Pity and Compassion, is, that it makes Men like to God,

Luke vi. 36. *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful; and that it is a most effectual Way to obtain Favour and Mercy from God, Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy: this (as the*

Heb. xiii. 2. *Apostle plainly implies) being a Sacrifice with which God is more particularly pleas'd. Inso-*

much, that whatever is laid out in Charity, God accounts an Offering and a Loan to himself; and accordingly he engages to repay it,

Prov. xxii. 9. *He who hath Pity on the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again. And that this Payment is chiefly in the next World, is the plain Language of Holy*

Scripture; which calls every charitable Contribution to the Necessities of the Poor upon

1 Tim. vi. 19. *Earth, the laying up a Treasure in Heaven, and the laying up in Store for our selves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal Life. And we have our Saviour's*

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Word for it, that for every good Office we do, to those who are not able to recompence us, *we shall be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just*; when the chief Enquiry is to be, who they are, that have *fed the Hungry, and cloath'd the Naked*; and when the Judge of the World will make an open and solemn Declaration, that whatever in that way has been done for the meanest Creature upon Earth, he accepts and rewards as done to himself; *Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Where our Saviour represents the Poor as standing by, while the Rich are making up their Accounts, like so many Witnesses in the Presence of Christ, to the good Works of them, from whose Hands they had receiv'd Succour and Relief in this World. Of so great Value are Works of Charity in the Eyes of God, and so great is the Reward which belongs to them in the next World: and this, to Charity of all Kinds whatsoever, as carrying in it that Godlike Disposition, of loving to do good, and being touch'd with a feeling of other Mens Wants and Miseries, and desiring to see all Mankind as happy and comfortable as our selves. But the Value of that Charity which

Luke xiv. 14.

Matt. xxv. 40.

which is our present Subject, is heighten'd by this peculiar Circumstance, That,

2dly, It is a Charity to the Soul. It does not only furnish many poor Children, who must otherwise have liv'd in Beggery and Contempt, with such Knowledge and Advantages as prepare them to live comfortably upon an honest Calling ; but, which is more, it furnishes their Souls with an early Knowledge of their Duty to God, and is the Means to inure them from the Beginning to a Habit of regular and orderly Living, and to plant in them such a Sense of Religion and Conscience as may carry them safe through the Temptations of a wicked World. And all this, at an Age, which, without such Discipline and Instruction, would almost unavoidably fall into Idleness, and Lying, and Theft, and all the vile Arts and Habits that are usually seen in that loose and strolling Life, without Subsistence and without Employment. By which Means, there is perpetually growing up among us, not only an useless, but what comes more directly under our present Consideration, a lewd, wicked, and profligate Race, void of all Knowledge and Sense of Duty, and utter Strangers to the Service and Worship of God. This is a great
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Evil, in many Respects; but in none so great and deplorable, as is the perishing of so many Souls, for want of Instruction and Discipline; which, by a little charitable Assistance at the Beginning, to season their tender Years with wholsom Instruction and good Impressions, might have deliver'd their Souls from Destruction, and made them eternally happy. We are apt to be mov'd with Compassion, at the Sight of Cold, and Hunger, and Nakedness (and it would be great Cruelty, not to be mov'd); but there is no Sight so truly pitiable, as Youth growing up in Ignorance and Idleness; as this is the high Way to Wickedness and Debauchery, and these the certain and unavoidable Ruin of their Souls. Now, the more valuable a Soul is, (for in respect of the Soul, the Rich and Poor are all equal) the higher must that Charity be, which extends its Care to it, and is employ'd in its Salvation; in delivering it, not only from *temporal* Pain and Disquiet (which will quickly have an End), but what is the great Consideration of all, in delivering it from *everlasting* Torment: And the more fatal to such poor Souls the Want of Discipline and Instruction usually is, the more valuable must that Charity be which

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supplies it, in the account of the great Judge of Quick and Dead, who came down from Heaven to save Souls, and to teach and instruct the Poor and Ignorant, and to *seek and to save that which was lost*. And the same ought to be the Work and Employment of every Christian, according to their several Stations, Abilities and Opportunities; and, since the Erecting of Schools of Charity is one of the most effectual Ways of planting in Children the Principles of Christianity, and preserving Multitudes from Destruction, whom, humanly speaking, nothing else *could* preserve; every Instance of *Care and Concern*, every Mite that is cast in, for the Maintenance and Continuance of such Schools, has in it this distinguishing Value, that it is so much contributed to the saving of a Soul, and will accordingly be esteem'd in the Eyes of Almighty God, the great Lover of Souls, who is not willing *that any should perish*, but that all should come to everlasting Life.

3. Another Circumstance, which exceedingly adds to the Value of this kind of Care and Charity, is, the Motive from which it proceeds; namely, that universal Love and good Will, which is the highest Precept of the Gospel, and the

and the peculiar Excellency of the Christian Religion. The Concern for Children and Relations, is a Principle of Nature, which usually works more or less, according to Affinity and Nearness in Blood : And tho' the Care which Parents take of the Education of their own Children, is the doing a very great Work, and a Work that ought to be done in the *first* Place ; yet, at the same time, it is a Work rather of *Justice* than *Charity* ; this being the Voice of Nature, and therefore the Doctrine of all Ages and Nations, that Children are *entitled*, in the strictest Sense, to the Care and Assistance of their Parents. For to bring poor Creatures into the World, to suffer them to be Slaves to Sin here, and consign'd to eternal Torments hereafter, would not only be unkind or unjust, but most cruel and unnatural. Thus far therefore Nature will carry them ; and so we oft-times see great Diligence and Concern for the *Welfare* of Children, in Men who are very wicked in other Respects, and appear not to be under any Restraint, of Religion or Conscience. For (as I said) thus far *mere Nature* will go ; but then, here Nature stops ; and that which *enlarges* our Care and Affection beyond this, is a Relation of another Kind,

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namely, a Religious and Spiritual Relation; as we are all Children of the same Father, Almighty God; all Servants under the same Master, the Lord Jesus; all Members of the same Mystical Body of Christ, and *every one Members one of another*. This is that Relation which the Apostle describes, (1 Cor. xii. 13.) *For by one Spirit are we all baptiz'd into one Body;* and then, at the 25th and 26th Verses, follows the proper *Effect* of this Relation, *that the Members should have the same Care one for another; and whether one Member suffer, all the Members should suffer with it*. So that the Concern which Men have for their Relations according to the Flesh, however laudable in itself, is yet too *narrow* for the Christian Religion; and between those Parents who confine their Care to their own Children, and those who to that add the Care of *others* also, as far as their Abilities will reach; between these (I say) there is the same Difference, in some Respects, that our Saviour sets between the *Jew* and *Samaritan* in the Gospel. The Jew had a very hearty Concern for all of his own Kindred and Nation, and for ought appears, was free and liberal when their Necessities requir'd his Assistance; and so far he

he did very well : but he fell far short of the Merit and Goodness of the Samaritan, who had that mighty Commendation given him by our Saviour, because, abhorring that narrow Distinction of Kindred, it appear'd that he was mov'd by a more noble Principle ; that he wanted no other Argument to afford his Help, but that he saw another in Need of it. In like Manner, they who take Care of the good Education of their *own* Children or Relations, do exceeding well, and deserve great Commendation for it ; and there is no doubt, but every Man's first and greatest Care, is his own Children and Family, as a Charge, which the Providence of God hath more immediately committed to him. But after all, it must be own'd, that in this, *Nature* has usually a great Share, and that the Charity which we are now pleading for, in behalf of those poor Objects before us, will, in regard of the Motives, be a *higher* Proof and Evidence of that universal Love, which the Gospel so earnestly enforces ; inasmuch as all worldly Regards and Considerations apart, what is done for these, is done purely *for the Sake of Christ* ; whose Children they are, and whose Children we show our selves to be, by such Care and Tenderness

derness to them, as becomes the Members of the same Body, one towards another. And what Value *Christ* will set upon every the least Act of Kindness and Charity that is done to such, for his Sake, and upon his Account, we learn from his own Mouth, (*Matth. x. 42.*) *Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a Cup of cold Water, only in the name of a Disciple ; Verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.*

Fourthly, There is yet another Consideration, which adds greatly to the Value, and by consequence to the Reward, of charitable Contributions in this Kind, namely, the *Application* and *Effects* of them. For tho' every Man is bound, in stating the Proportions of his Charity, to lay out in such Measures and Degrees as God has bless'd him ; yet does not the *Value* of Charity arise barely from the *parting* with so much, but from a probable Prospect of the Good it will do, which ought always to be one main thing in the Thought and Intention of the Giver. And perhaps there is no Kind of Charity whatever, where so little works so great Effects, as in this Way ; and these Effects so certain, as very seldom to fail. If the same Contributions were employ'd
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in the *Maintenance* of these, without the Benefit of *Education*; it might keep them from perishing at present, but it would lay no Foundation for their future Comfort. Or, suppose the Instruction and Education of each, were to be separately provided for by the Charity of particular Persons; their doing of this in the first Place, would fall within the *Abilities* of very few; next, it would, in the whole, require much larger Supplies; and, which is most considerable in this Matter, the Children (in the Way of a private Education) would lose the many Advantages which they now receive by living under that excellent Order and Government into which they are here form'd. And upon this Account, Religion is extremely indebted to the first pious Contrivers, and the present pious Managers, of these Schools of Charity; not only as they put it in the Power of the meanest Persons to cast in their Mite, and to bear a Part in so good a Work; but as such regular Constitutions are the best Security to the *Morals* and *Virtue* of Children: At the same Time that they enrich their Minds with Christian Knowledge, they replenish their Hearts with Christian Dispositions; all the while they are *instructing* them in their Duty, they

they are also preparing them to *love* and *practise* it ; by restraining them from youthful Follies and Excesses, and habituating them to a compos'd and regular Behaviour, and obliging them to a constant Attendance upon the publick Worship of God. By which means, Vice is shut out, at an Age, when it has otherwise the most easy Entrance, and Goodness is put in Possession of their Hearts from the Beginning ; and the Soil being thus sweet and clean, the Seeds of Religion that are sown in it, grow up and thrive apace, and rarely fail of bringing forth Fruit to Perfection, that is, of making sober, diligent, and religious Christians, prepar'd, by that Means, to live comfortably in this World, and to be eternally happy in the next. And who, that has the Bowels of a Man, and knows the Value of a Soul, but would desire a Share in this blessed Work ? Who, that rightly considers his own Interest, would not employ some Part of his Treasure, where the Increase is so great ; great, both to himself and others, both in this World and the next ? And who, that has any Relish of Religion and Goodness, would be debarr'd from labouring in a Vineyard, that brings these Fruits to so great Perfection ? God be thank'd, the Labourers are many ;

many ; Numbers of pious and good Christians have their Hearts and Hands open, to carry on these Nurseries of Religion for the Poor : but it must be remember'd, that as the Labourers are many, so the *Harvest is exceeding great*, and calls for many more Hands. *Multitudes* of poor Children, for Want of Education, lie still expos'd to the same Miseries, both temporal and spiritual, from which the Number taken in (very small in Comparison to those without) is happily delivered ; and the Reason why more are not invited and constrain'd to come in, is not, because no more are to be *found* in our Streets and Lanes, but because there is yet no Provision for more. And no Christian can desire a fairer Argument to promote the Enlargement of the Provision by greater Degrees of Liberality, than to be an Eye-Witness of the Excellent Effects which the Charities in this Way do every Year produce. When it pleases God to prosper the Design in so remarkable a Manner, it is a Testimony of his Liking and Acceptance ; and his watering the Seed that is already sown, so plentifully, with the Dew of his Blessing, is an Invitation to every Christian to sow still more plentifully, in an Assurance that God will raise from it a

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proportionable Increase. Upon the first Contrivance of these Schools of Charity in the Nation, a Christian, otherwise of no uncharitable Temper, might be allow'd to doubt whether they were really practicable, and how far they would answer the Ends propos'd, and upon these Accounts might suspend or contract his Charity, till he should see the Event. But now, we see such great Effects from such slender Beginnings, and how much more glorious the Fabrick might be made, if the Foundations were enlarg'd; nothing can tie up the Hands of Men from contributing to this great Work, but an utter Unconcernedness for the Religion of Jesus Christ and the Salvation of Mankind.

Lastly, The Value of this kind of Care and Charity rises still higher, as it extends not only to the present Age, but to *Posterity* also. As we are Men, endowed with Reason and Understanding, we are all Members of one Civil Society; as we are Christians, baptized into the same common Faith, we are all Members of the Church of Christ upon Earth. And as we are Members both of a Civil and a Christian Society; we stand engaged not only to study the Welfare of both, during our own Time,

Time, but also to do what in us lies, that both be transmitted in a peaceable and flourishing State, to our latest Posterity. This is what Mankind readily acknowledge and practise in their private Capacities, as they are Fathers and Heads of Families; making it not only their Care, but the greatest Care of their Lives, to convey Comfort and Honour to their Posterity. Which the Roman Orator speaks of, not only as an Inclination of Nature, but as a strict Duty, resulting from the Wisdom of Providence in the Government of the World, and founded on the Obligations resting upon us, for the many good Things which descended to us from our Forefathers.

Nec vero dubitet Agricola, quamvis Senex, quærenti cui serat? respondere, Diis immortalibus, qui me non accipere modo hæc à majoribus voluerunt, sed etiam posteris prodere. Cicero de Senect.

“ If a Husbandman, (says he) tho’ never so aged, be ask’d, Who he sows for? let his Answer be, For God; whose Will it is, that as we received these Things from our Ancestors, we should also transmit them to our Posterity.” In like Manner, with regard to the publick Welfare of Church and State; as we are Members of a Society, and succeed in the National Blessings

of Peace and Order, convey'd to us by our Ancestors, we stand engaged to convey to our Posterity the like Blessings; and much more, as we are Members of a Christian Society, are we bound to transmit and secure to them the yet greater Blessing of a *national* Piety and Religion.

And what is thus *owing* to Posterity, nothing will more enable the present Age to *discharge*, than this Institution of publick Schools of Charity; where the Children of the poorest and meanest Sort, whom both Magistrates and Ministers find by Experience to be the most ungovernable and dissolute part of the Nation, are now civiliz'd, and are daily imbibing the Principles of Humanity and Religion, to be shown and practis'd in the next Age: When, we have Reason to hope, they will be the great Examples of Peace and Piety; and, I will add, the most useful Assistants to Magistrates and Ministers in the Maintenance and Propagation of both.

But that we may be sure, under the Influence of God's Grace, that we are conveying to our Posterity a Blessing *unmix'd*; great Care must be taken, not only that no Principles be instill'd into them, but such as are sound and good,

good, but also that those be instill'd with the greatest Diligence, which are in their Nature of greatest and most constant Use in the Course of a *private* Life; such as immediately tend to make Men serious Christians, and peaceable Subjects: and above all, that their Minds be not tinctured with any new and singular Notions, either in Religion or Government; which would only divert their Minds from the substantial Duties and Offices of Religion, and make them proud, busy, and contentious.

In *Religion*, there are many Points controverted with no little Warmth, which stand at a great Distance from the Foundations of Christianity; but yet, being espoused by Persons of Figure and Learning, they presently become Party-points, and Profelytes are made with as much Zeal, as if the whole Christian Scheme were to stand or fall with them. Such were, in the last Age, the Heads which have been commonly known and distinguished by the Name of the *Five Points*; and such are, in our Age, the *Real Sacrifice*, the *Absolution of the Priest*, and the like; which being managed with Calmness and Decency, may be innocently contested among learned Men (tho' perhaps, not over usefully even among them,) but are
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much above the Reach of Children, and generally of their Teachers too ; in whose Hands therefore they are at best but idle Amusements, and, if put into their Hands, would naturally lead them into two great Evils, namely, to mistake such Speculative Points for Fundamentals, and to bestow greater Zeal upon those, than even upon the Fundamentals themselves.

For these Reasons, great Care ought to be taken in the Education of Children, that no such Mixtures slide in among the Fundamentals of Christianity ; and to confine them to such Doctrines and Principles as more immediately concern Faith and a good Life, as the only Doctrines that are necessary to Salvation : To teach them their Duty to God, their Neighbour, and themselves ; to make them sensible of the Necessity of the Grace of God to enable them to perform it, and that the only Means of obtaining the divine Grace, is, earnest Prayer, and a religious Use of the Ordinances of the Gospel : To instruct them carefully in the Nature of the Gospel-Covenant, and above all, in the whole Work of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, as the great Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind ; who
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hath made *Atonement* for us, and thro' whom alone we have Access to God. A Doctrine, the more necessary to be inculcated, not only as it is the great Foundation of Christianity, but because so many in this Age are labouring openly and bare-faced to turn the whole Christian Scheme into a System of mere Morality.

And, with regard to those other Points, it is much to be lamented, that even Divines, who are agreed, that whether the Lord's Supper be a real Sacrifice, or only the *Commemoration* of a Sacrifice, the spiritual Effects are the very same, should raise a Dispute concerning that Point, at a Time when it is openly denied, that the very Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross was real and propitiatory: And further, when they are agreed, that whether the Absolution of the Priest be *Authoritative* or *Declaratory* only, the Effect depends upon the inward Disposition of the Person who receives it, they should spend their Zeal upon that Head, at a Time when the very Being of Church Power, and the divine Institution of a Gospel-Ministry, are openly disputed, or rather flatly denied. Undoubtedly, the best Service that can be done to Religion by Persons of Learning in this Age, is, to watch those most narrowly, who
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are undermining the Foundations of it; and the best Way to prepare Children to be a true Support and Honour to Religion in the next Age, is to restrain them diligently from unnecessary Speculations of all Kinds, and to turn their Minds stedfastly upon the only Points which properly concern them, namely, the great Rules of Faith and Practice.

And as in Religion, so also in *Government*, many speculative Points are sprung, concerning the Constitutions of Kingdoms, and the Rights of Princes; generally, with a Design to breed Disturbances in the State, and to perplex the publick Administration. But, be the Design what it will, they seldom fail of those unhappy *Effects*; especially among the meaner Sort, who having not Capacity enough to enter into the Grounds and Reasons of such Things, are carried away with *Words* and *Names*, while they remain utter Strangers to the real Merits of the Cause. By this one Stratagem, more than any other, the present Age has been miserably divided into Parties and Factions; which have more than once brought Church and State to the Brinks of Destruction: and tho' we are not to *hope* that Persons who are already heated in this kind of Service (be they ever
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so unfit to judge,) will be perswaded to confine themselves to their proper Business, and to leave the publick Administration to wiser Heads; yet certainly, to prevent these Mischiefs from descending to our Posterity, it is proper that the *younger Sort* be restrain'd from mixing in these unwarrantable Follies: That they be taught, not to speak Evil of Dignities; but to reverence Authority, and to pay all Duty, Honour and Obedience, to the *Powers that are*; and this not only for Conscience sake, but for the Sake of *Interest* too, as we have no other Security under God, for our Religion and Liberties: Which as it may be said and inculcated, with the greatest Truth and Justice; so will it not fail to be inculcated by all, who have the Care of Youth, and at the same Time wish well to our most happy Establishment. And as this Lesson, of reverencing Authority, and leaving the publick Administration to the proper Hands, naturally prepares them for another excellent Rule of the Apostle, to study *to be quiet, and to do their own Business, and to work with their own Hands*; so those two, jointly, lay the Foundation, of a wise, useful, and comfortable Life, of a Life of Quietness, Peace, and Love. Whereas, the

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1 Thess. iv.

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lifting Children in Party Opinions and Party Measures, lays the surest Foundation for a Life of Idleness and Folly; and besides, how monstrous would it be in a *Christian* Education, if Children were to be train'd up, from their Cradles, to a settled Dislike and Abhorrence of one *half* of Mankind!

Happy therefore is it, for these tender Years now before us, and for their Brethren throughout these Kingdoms, that both themselves and their Teachers are under *peculiar* Restraints from falling into those Follies and Extravagancies; since, whatever Divisions and Animosities there may be amongst us in other Respects, in this of supporting and encouraging our Schools of Charity, both Sides are entirely agreed. And as the Children would be betrayed into the highest Act of Ingratitude, should they be led to reproach and revile their Benefactors or their Cause; so would the Teachers be guilty, not only of great Ingratitude, but also of the highest Imprudence, or rather Madness, if a blind Zeal for any Party should induce them to encourage or permit the least Indignity against those, by whom they are subsisted in such a kind and bountiful Manner.

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May these and all other Infections ever remain at the greatest Distance from those publick Nurseries of Virtue and Religion: Let it be always their distinguishing Honour, that whatever Prejudices may be imbibed elsewhere, in these shall be instill'd the Principles of Christianity, pure and unmix'd; and that, however almost all Orders and Degrees among us are involved in Contentions, however Lying, and Slandering, and Malice, have well nigh overspread the Face of these Nations; yet nothing shall be found within those Walls, but Peace, and Truth, and Charity. And finally, how long soever it may please God, for our Sins, to suffer Divisions amongst us in other Matters, may we ever remain unanimous in the Support and Maintenance of our Schools of Charity; as Institutions of the greatest and most evident Benefit to Religion and Government, and, next to our Gracious Sovereign and his Royal Issue, the surest Pledges of the Favour and Goodness of God, to Us and our Posterity.

F I N I S.

